

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 10395 041158Z

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 OPR-02 OMB-01 AID-20 IO-13 NIC-01 OC-06

CCO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 SY-10 /123 W

----- 129939

O R 041111Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4053

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 10395

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS LE

SUBJ: LEBANESE ARMY CLASH WITH FEDAYEEN SUPPORTERS

1. THREE LEBANESE CIVILIANS WITH CLOSE TIES WITH FEDAYEEN WERE KILLED IN CLASH NEAR ARMY ROADBLOCK ON OUTSKIRTS OF BEIRUT JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT SEPT 4 FOLLOWING ATTEMPT BY LEBANESE SOLDIERS TO ARREST THEM FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARMS. ACCORDING TO ARMY COMMUNIQUE, ISSUED THIS MORNING, CULPRITS WERE BEING ESCORTED TO MILITARY COURT WHEN THEY TRIED TO ESCAPE. IN ENSUING FIREFIGHT, ALL THREE WERE KILLED AND AN ARMY OFFICER SLIGHTLY WOUNDED. WE UNDERSTAND FROM POLICE SOURCES THAT THREE CIVILIANS WERE MEMBERS OF LOCAL GANG OF THUGS LED BY IBRAHIM QOLAYLAT, KNOWN FOR HIS CLOSE TIES WITH SA'IQA AND FOR PAST COOPERATION IN FEDAYEEN GUNRUNNING AND OTHER UNSAVORY ACTIVITIES.

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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 10395 041158Z

2. INCIDENT CAUSED HEIGHTENED JITTERINESS AND TENSION ON PART OF LEBANESE ARMY AND INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES THROUGHOUT MORNING HOURS, ALTHOUGH BEIRUT POLICE CHIEF INFORMED EMBOFF AT 0900Z THAT CITY NOW APPEARS QUIET AND HE EXPECTS "NO FURTHER TROUBLE". WE NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT ARMY AND POLICE ARE STILL EXERCISING UNUSUAL DEGREE OF ALERTNESS AND THAT PATROLLING ACTIVITY CONTINUES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF CITY.

3. SPOKESMAN FOR FEDAYEEN LEADERSHIP ANNOUNCED THIS MORNING THAT NO FEDAYEEN WERE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN INCIDENT WHICH HE COMPLAINED STEMMED FROM A "PREMEDITATED EFFORT TO PROVOKE OUR MASSES...AND RENEW THE ATTEMPT TO STRIKE AT PALESTINE REVOLUTION AND LEBANESE NATIONALIST FORCES". HE CALLED ON GOL TO PUT AN END TO THIS "PLOT" AND PUNISH PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INCIDENT. (LATEST NEWS REPORTS INDICATE THAT ARMY COMMANDER AT LAST NIGHT'S ROADBLOCK HAS BEEN "DETAINED" PENDING GOL INQUIRY INTO INCIDENT). LOCAL LEFTIST PRESS GIVING MUCH PLAY TO SAME THEME, QUOTING QOLAYAT VERSION OF INCIDENT WHICH PREDICTABLY DIFFERS IN ALMOST EVERY DETAIL FROM ARMY COMMUNIQUE.
BUFFUM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARAMILITARY FORCES, ARRESTS, DEATHS, CIVIL DISORDERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BEIRUT10395
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS BUFFUM
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730957/aaaabpwz.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03-Jan-2002 by willialc>; APPROVED <14-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEBANESE ARMY CLASH WITH FEDAYEEN SUPPORTERS
TAGS: PINS, LE, (QOLAYLAT, IBRAHIM)
To: n/a
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005